

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 1 to 2 (canceled)

3. (currently amended) An encoder for producing an encoded packetised stream, comprising:

means for manipulating timing boundaries between packets in a model of a repacketised stream to determine determining a minimum data rate to which the packetised stream could be repacketised for ~~successful~~ decoding by a decoder having a given first-in-first-out (FIFO) buffer size without FIFO buffer overflow; and

means for introducing into the stream control data representing the minimum data rate.

4. (previously amended) An encoder as claimed in claim 3, wherein the encoded stream is losslessly compressed digital audio data.

Claims 5 to 15 (canceled)

16. (previously amended) A mastering system comprising the encoder as claimed in claim 3.

17. (original) A system comprising a mastering system as claimed in claim 16, and means for repacketising the data to form a stream having a peak data rate calculated in dependence upon the control data.

18. (original) A system as claimed in claim 17, wherein the stream having a peak data rate corresponding to the control data comprises a fixed rate stream.

19. (original) A system for providing encoded data to a DVD comprising a mastering system as claimed in claim 16, and means for writing the control data onto the disc with the encoded data.

20. (previously amended) A system for providing encoded data to a DVD comprising a mastering system and an authoring system, the authoring system including an encoder as claimed in claim 3.

21. (previously amended) A system as claimed in any one of claims 17 to 20, wherein the encoder comprises a Meridian Lossless Packing (MLP) lossless encoder for audio data.

Claims 22 to 24 (canceled)

25. (currently amended) A data processing method comprising:

producing a packetised encoded variable rate stream;

manipulating timing boundaries between packets in a model of a repacketised stream to determine determining a minimum data rate to which the variable rate stream could be repacketised for ~~successful~~ decoding by a decoder having a given first-in-first-out (FIFO) buffer size without FIFO buffer overflow; and

introducing control data into the encoded variable rate stream, the control data representing the minimum data.

Claim 26 to 28 (canceled)

29. (previously amended) The data processing method of claim 25, wherein the encoded variable rate stream comprises losslessly compressed digital audio data.

Claim 30 (canceled)

31. (previously amended) The data processing method of claim 25, further comprising processing the control data to determine an adequate bandwidth for transmission of the encoded variable rate stream, and transmitting the encoded variable rate stream over an interface having at least the adequate bandwidth.

32. (previously presented) The data processing method of claim 31 wherein the interface operates at a fixed data rate.

33. (previously presented) The data processing method of claim 31, wherein the interface is for communication between a DVD player and external equipment.

Claims 34 to 44 (canceled)

45. (currently amended) A device-system for decoding variable rate data organized as a stream of packets and conveying control data representing a minimum data rate to which the packetised stream could be repacketised for decoding by a decoder having a given first-in-first-out (FIFO) buffer size without FIFO buffer overflow, each packet including a corresponding decoder time stamp, the device comprising:

a feed buffer that receives and stores the stream of packets ~~to mitigate any interruption in the stream of packets~~;

a repacketiser responsive to the control data that manipulates timing boundaries between packets in the stream of packets;

a FIFO buffer having an input coupled to the feed buffer for receiving the stored ~~data~~ packets, and having an output; and

a decoder having an input coupled to the output of the FIFO buffer that decodes the packets with manipulated timing boundaries.

46. (currently amended) The device-system of claim 45, wherein the feed buffer stores each packet in the stream of packets until the corresponding decoder time stamp for each packet is identified.

47. (currently amended) The device-system of claim 45, wherein the variable rate data comprises losslessly compressed digital audio data.

48. (currently amended) The device-system of claim 45, wherein the variable rate data comprises digital data that has been encoded by a Meridian Lossless Packing (MLP) encoder.

49. (currently amended) The device-system of claim 45, wherein the decoder is a Meridian Lossless Packing (MLP) decoder.

Claim 50. (canceled)